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SUBJECT: SOUTHEAST TURKEY PRESS SUMMARY FOR JUNE 26, 2006

This is the Southeastern Turkey press summary for June 26, 2006.

Please note that Turkish press reports often contain errors or exaggerations; AmConsulate Adana does not vouch for the accuracy of the reports summarized here.

POLITICAL, SECURITY, HUMAN RIGHTS

ZAMAN: A village guard has been killed because of a mine explosion in Elazig's Palu district. The mine was placed allegedly by PKK members.

OZGUR GUNDEM: 4500 people set off from Diyarbakir in 120 vehicles for the DTP congress to be held on Sunday in Ankara. Jandarma allegedly caused difficulties to people traveling to Ankara from Sirnak by conducting intermittent searches on cars on separate sections of the road. Twenty buses and 25 cars from Batman, nearly 200 people from Siirt, four buses and four cars from Mardin set off for Ankara yesterday. Thousands of people reportedly arrived in Ankara from Mardin, Bingol, Malatya, Tunceli and Sanliurfa, as well. (This summary is from 06/25 edition)

ZAMAN / BOLGE / SABAH / YENI SAFAK / CUMHURIYET / RADIKAL / EVRENSEL: The dailies reported that when posters of PKK leader Abdullah Ocalan were waved and pro-PKK slogans in Kurdish were shouted during DTP's congress held in Ankara on Sunday (06/25), the president of the congress warned those groups. 15,000 people reportedly took part in the congress. The congress marked the first time in ten years that the Ataturk Sports Hall (ASH) has been assigned to the congress of an ethnic-based party. (Note: In 1996, an incident concerning the removal of Turkish flag during the HADEP's congress took place at ASH. End Note.) The dailies noted that Turkish flag was hung, but Turkish National Anthem was not sung at the onset of the congress. Abdullah Ocalan's brother and sister, representatives of IRA and ETA, mayors from DTP attended the congress. Kurdish activist Leyla Zana did not attend the congress. Ahmet Turk, the sole candidate for DTP chairmanship, said that they would amend their charter according to the requirements placed by the Supreme Court; but a de facto co-chairmanship would continue within the party. (Note: Aysel Tugluk, former co-chairperson, did not announce her candidacy; despite the fact that she was the one recommended allegedly by Ocalan for chairmanship of the party. End Note.) Turk called on the government to introduce amendments in the constitution and political parties act, to lower the election threshold, to end the "isolation" of the inmate at the Imrali Jail, to introduce a general amnesty for political prisoners, to introduce policies concerning education in one's mother tongue, to withdraw the draft anti-terror law etc.; however, Turk reportedly did not make a call to PKK to lay down arms. The congress elected Turk as the national chairperson.

OZGUR GUNDEM: DTP's former co-chairperson Aysel Tugluk said that they were told to put distance between the party and the PKK at several occasions. According to Tugluk, it was impossible to realize that argument. Tugluk, on the contrary, argued that democratic forces and the society should remove the barriers between themselves and the PKK to end the ongoing war within the country. Ahmet Turk told the crowd that a solution that does not involve the Kurds would not be realistic. Both Tugluk and Turk called on the Turkish state to establish a dialogue with the Kurds.

OZGUR GUNDEM: Joost Lagendijk, Head of the Turkey-EU Joint Parliament, criticized the requirement in Turkey's "Regulation Governing Broadcasts in Different Languages and Dialects" which stipulates using Turkish subtitles in Kurdish language broadcasting. An official from the Diyarbakir-based Gun TV said that they filed a lawsuit with the Council of State to annul the subtitles requirement in the regulation.

OZGUR GUNDEM: The daily cites allegations that the U.S. had started operations in the radar base located in Hatay's Amanos Mountains.

OZGUR GUNDEM: A group comprised of members of ESP (Socialist Platform of the Oppressed People) and SGD (Socialist Youth Association) staged a protest against the pollution seen in the Asi River (Orontes River) in Hatay.

HURRIYET / OZGUR GUNDEM / ZAMAN: Eleven PKK terrorists have been killed in a clash which broke out between PKK terrorists, who attempted to infiltrate Turkey, and Turkish Armed Forces, at Cukurca district of Hakkari on Friday (06/23) morning, Hakkari Governor's Office announced. (This summary is from 06/24 editions)

CUMHURİYET: Two non-commissioned officers were wounded in

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Elazig's Maden district because of a mine blast that took place on a road. (This summary is from 06/25 edition)

OZGUR GUNDEM: Seferi Yilmaz, owner of the bookstore bombed last year in November in Hakkari, who was arrested early last week and imprisoned in Van's jail, told his attorneys that he was arrested only because a PKK informant told the authorities that some PKK members had said they (PKK) should protect Seferi Yilmaz. Yilmaz complained that he was put in solitary confinement and he was barred access to books and newspapers. (This summary is from 06/25 edition)

ZAMAN: 680,000 barrels of petroleum have been loaded onto the Panama-flagged second vessel, Tridents Hope, and the vessel started its journey towards Laveraport in France. The third vessel will reportedly arrive at Haydar Aliyev Terminal at Ceyhan on June 27. A total of 9 petroleum vessels will come to the terminal throughout July. Meanwhile, preparations for the July 13 official opening of the pipeline are under way. Fifteen presidents, 30 prime ministers, and nearly 50 ministers will reportedly take part in the opening ceremony. (This summary is from 06/25 edition)

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